## AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

- 1. (currently amended) An image processing method for obtaining a layout image signal representing a layout image, in which a plurality of person images are laid out, from a plurality of original image signals, each of the original image signals representing a person image, in which a face pattern of a person is embedded, the method comprising the steps of:
- i) detecting <u>a</u> face <u>candidate region</u> <u>information</u> from each of the original image signals, said face <u>candidate region</u> <u>information</u> representing a position and/or a size of the face pattern of the person in the person image represented by each original image signal,
- ii) performing a pattern matching process for each face pattern represented by said detected face <u>candidate region</u> information to calculate an amount of displacement and/or size difference thereof from a normalized value,
- each of the original image signals based on said detected face <a href="mailto:candidate region">candidate region information</a> and said calculated amount of displacement and/or size difference, a plurality of normalized image signals being obtained from said face pattern normalizing process, and
- iv) laying out a plurality of images, which are represented by said normalized image signals, in a predetermined



layout, whereby the layout image signal representing the thus formed layout image is obtained.

- 2. (original) A method as defined in Claim 1 wherein said face pattern normalizing process is performed by utilizing affine transformation.
- 3. (currently amended) An image processing apparatus for obtaining a layout image signal representing a layout image, in which a plurality of person images are laid out, from a plurality of original image signals, each of the original image signals representing a person image, in which a face pattern of a person is embedded, the apparatus comprising:
- i) detection means for detecting <u>a</u> face <u>candidate region</u> information from each of the original image signals, said face <u>candidate region</u> information representing a position and/or a size of the face pattern of the person in the person image represented by each original image signal,
- ii) pattern matching means for performing a pattern matching process for each face pattern represented by said detected face <u>candidate region</u> <u>information</u> to calculate an amount of displacement and/or size difference thereof from a normalized value,
- iii) normalization means for performing a face pattern normalizing process on each of the original image signals based on

said detected face <u>candidate region</u> information and said calculated amount of displacement and/or size difference, a plurality of normalized image signals being obtained from said face pattern normalizing process, and

iv) editing means for laying out a plurality of images, which are represented by said normalized image signals, in a predetermined layout, and obtaining the layout image signal representing the thus formed layout image.



- 4. (original) An apparatus as defined in Claim 3 wherein said face pattern normalizing process is performed by utilizing affine transformation.
- 5. (currently amended) A recording medium, on which a program for causing a computer to execute an image processing method has been recorded and from which the computer is capable of reading the program, the image processing method comprising obtaining a layout image signal representing a layout image, in which a plurality of person images are laid out, from a plurality of original image signals, each of the original image signals representing a person image, in which a face pattern of a person is embedded,

wherein the program comprises the procedures of:

i) detecting  $\underline{a}$  face  $\underline{candidate}$  region  $\underline{information}$  from each of the original image signals, said face  $\underline{candidate}$  region

information representing a position and/or a size of the face
pattern of the person in the person image represented by each
original image signal,

ii) performing a pattern matching process for each face pattern represented by said detected face <u>candidate region</u> information to calculate an amount of displacement and/or size difference thereof from a normalized value,

iii) performing a face pattern normalizing process on each of the original image signals based on said detected face <u>candidate</u> region information and said calculated amount of displacement and/or size difference, a plurality of normalized image signals being obtained from said face pattern normalizing process, and

- iv) laying out a plurality of images, which are represented by said normalized image signals, in a predetermined layout, whereby the layout image signal representing the thus formed layout image is obtained.
- 6. (original) A recording medium as defined in Claim 5 wherein said face pattern normalizing process is performed by utilizing affine transformation.
- 7. (new) The image processing method according to claim 1, wherein the face candidate region is detected in accordance with hue and saturation.



- 8. (new) The image processing method according to claim 1, wherein only a face outline is utilized for the pattern matching process.
- 9. (new) The image processing apparatus according to claim 3, wherein the face candidate region is detected in accordance with hue and saturation.
- 10. (new) The image processing apparatus according to claim 3, wherein only a face outline is utilized for the pattern matching process.
- 11. (new) The recording medium according to claim 5, wherein the face candidate region is detected in accordance with hue and saturation.
- 12. (new) The recording medium according to claim 5, wherein only a face outline is utilized for the pattern matching process.



